

and simplest steps, which seem almost self-evident to the expositor, are left insufficiently explained, and the abashed pupil, feeling stupid, is ashamed to ask about them. Dr. Vernon makes each stage perfectly clear as he goes along, and gives worked examples of the problems he is discussing, without however falling into the error of insulting the intelligence of his readers. The statistical methods for handling frequency distributions, the theory of sampling, and the measurement of correlation are all explained, and what conclusions can validly be drawn from material obtained by these methods. Teachers will read with great interest, and probably some dismay, what the author has to say about school marks.

In the second section of the book, dealing with mental tests, are brought together the results of recent research and discussion concerning the abilities measured by the current tests, how far the various tests are adequate to their purpose, and what pitfalls can be avoided in using them. Many suggestions for improvement in methods are made, and a most useful list is given of the mental tests available in this country, with particulars of age limits, times, publishers, prices, and norms of scores.

The final chapters are devoted to an examination of examinations. The relative merits of the essay type most normally used in this country and the newer, more objective type, are discussed. The new-type examination is widely employed in America, but has so far been rather neglected in Britain. Dr. Vernon considers that more attention to its possibilities might be given here, and he gives valuable advice for those about to construct such tests. To illustrate his points he includes a complete examination paper for students of mental measurement and statistics. Incidentally, this would make a useful test for readers of the book who are newcomers to its problems and would like to discover what it has taught them. A glance through the bibliography which ends the volume reminds one that a large body of investigators are slowly accumulating a mass of facts and theories relevant to the work of practising teachers and clinicians, which

the greater number of these people totally neglect.

It is to be hoped that this book will be widely read. Much injustice is done to examinees through the sheer inefficiency of examiners, and a thorough study of the arguments presented should at least form a starting point for improvement both in obtaining and interpreting measurements of abilities.

EVELYN LAWRENCE.

Brown, William, D.M., D.Sc., F.R.C.P.
Psychology and Psychotherapy. London, 1940. Edward Arnold. Pp. 260. Price 12s. 6d.

THIS is the fourth edition of a book originally published in 1920. It was substantially rewritten for the third edition of 1934, and has now been reissued with the appendices on correlational psychology omitted, and two new chapters on "Sublimation" and "The Problems of Later Life," added.

It is one of those books of which it is difficult to visualize the possible readers as any kind of group. Dr. Brown, in years of academic and clinical experience, has evolved a personal standpoint which is based on an attempt to see in logical relationship and some wholeness the views of many differing psychological authorities. It is doubtful, however, whether this standpoint can be adequately explained in a short book, especially when part of its space is devoted to such material as a semi-popular address on the psychological problems of later life delivered under the auspices of the Alliance of Honour. The relation between the theories of Freud and those of other contemporary writers, the relation of mind to body, the treatment of the neuroses, are highly technical problems needing lengthy exposition. They have here to be condensed and deprived of much of the illustrative material which would enable the arguments to be fairly judged. The case histories included are too brief to illustrate in any detail the therapeutic methods employed. One gets the impression that slight treatment, largely by suggestion, is often regarded as sufficient on

the inadequate evidence of failure to return for treatment as proof of cure.

The second half of the book contains, as well as a discussion of telepathy and psychical research, chapters on the psychology of adolescence, peace and war, sublimation and spirituality. They are slighter than the earlier ones, and likely to be helpful to readers with too little psychological knowledge for tackling the more technical problems.

The book is most interesting as the creed of a therapist who is convinced of the adequacy of treatment by suggestion and personal influence supported by religious belief.

EVELYN LAWRENCE.

FAMILY ALLOWANCES

Rathbone, Eleanor F. *The Case for Family Allowances.* Penguin Special. Pp. 118. Price 6d.

THIS clear, concise and witty book should be read with care by all who wish to understand the urgent social problems of our time. It is a convincing statement of the view that the institution of family allowances would not only combine justice with expediency, but also mitigate the worst cases of poverty. Indeed, one wonders how a measure so successfully adopted in so many other countries, and so clearly overdue here, has been neglected for so long.

Much of the introduction deserves to be quoted in full. Thus: "Children, as the future citizens and workers, have a value to Society which does not depend on, and has no direct relation to, the value of the father's work for his employer." Again: "The present system fails to secure the well-being of children, and reacts unfavourably on the health, character and happiness of their parents, and through them on the prosperity and security of the community as a whole." And further: "Our proposal is not a substitute for greater productivity, or more goodwill, or workers' control, or Socialism, or any other 'ism.' It is neither dependent on nor antagonistic to any of these things. It aims only at meeting a particular need which would continue even if all these other

ends were achieved—will continue indeed so long as the institution of the Family continues."

Miss Rathbone divides her book into five chapters. Chapter I on the Ethical Case against the Present Method of Provision for Children, discusses the terrible strain imposed by parenthood, both on the man and on the woman, in our modern society. From the mother, child-bearing and child-rearing demand a heroism and a toll of health and life greater even than that of "the miner who goes down the pit every working day of the year." It is well to be reminded of "the sometimes exasperating patience of the very poor under sufferings which might have been remedied if they had been less patient." But finally, and most distressing of all, is the effect of extreme poverty upon the children, "steadily deteriorating in health and character." Miss Rathbone's indictment of the lack of imagination in the well-to-do classes is expressed with moving, indeed with humiliating, persuasiveness. Thus: "They are so used to class differences of every kind that it seems to them perfectly natural and right that their own children should have greater opportunities of making the best of themselves than those of the wage-earners. . . . Does that justify those whose own environment should make the elementary virtues of temperance, decency, order, good manners so easy that they cease to be virtues and become instinctive habits, in acquiescing for others in conditions which make these things so difficult that the frequency of their achievement seems a miracle?" Society is content to do "just enough to enable them to grow up and perpetuate their kind, not enough to secure them the chance to be *well born* and well reared." Chapter II, The Economic Case Against the Present Method, quotes the views of many leading economists, such as Sir William Beveridge, who maintains that "the greatest single cause of poverty in this country is young children." This cloud of witness culminates in Miss Rathbone's own words: "In these dark days, when pain of body and mind in acute and terrible forms has become so common that we have all